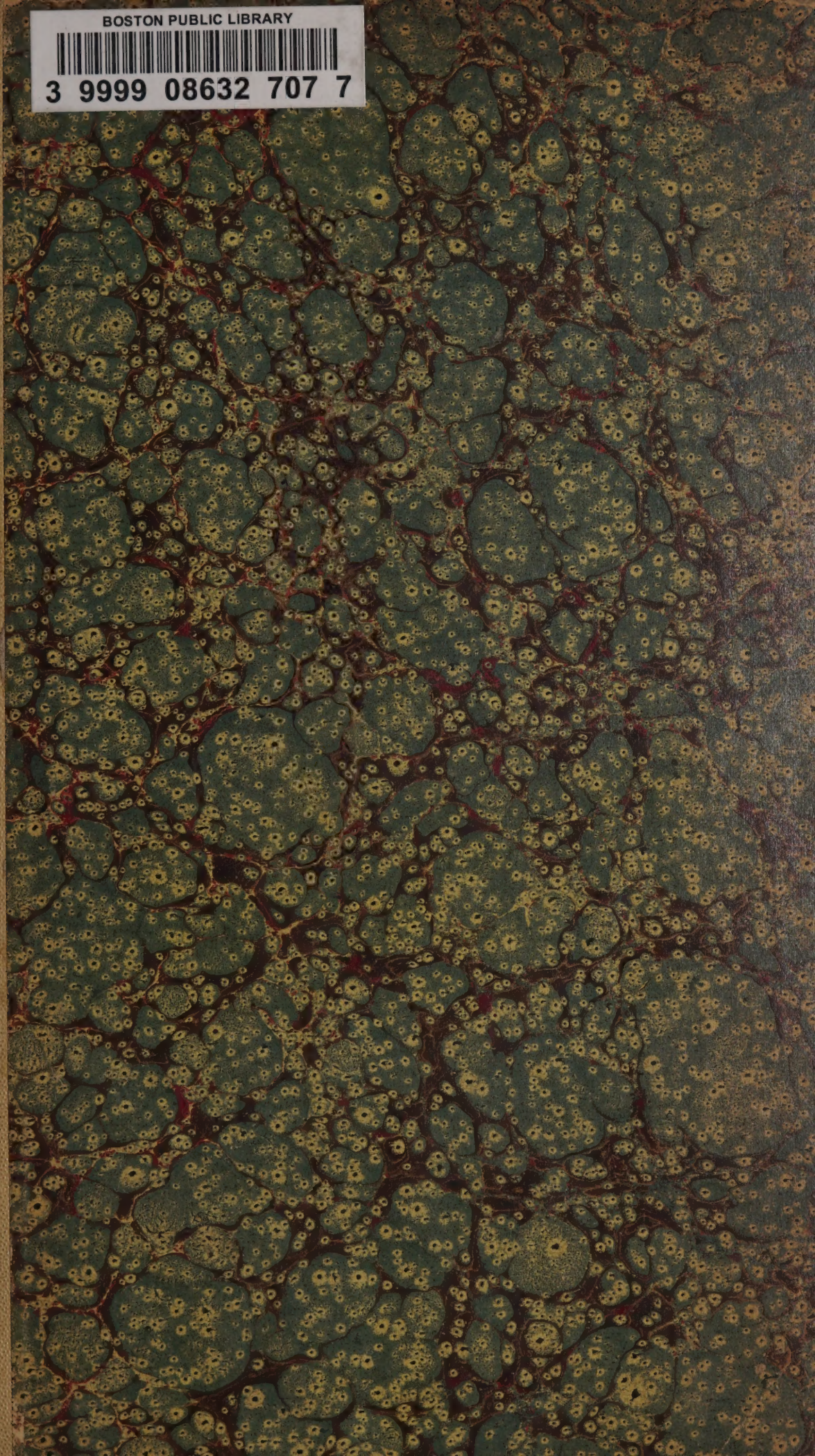


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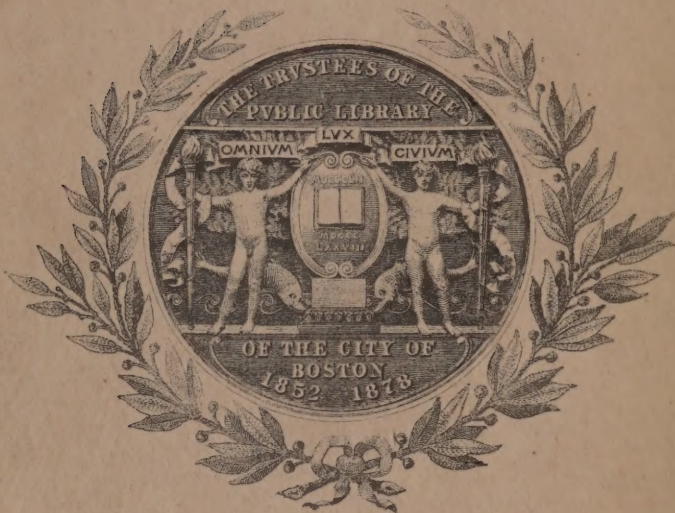


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*Martin Paris to his friend  
and humble servant*

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AN  
ANNIVERSARY SERMON,  
PREACHED  
AT PLIMOUTH, DECEMBER 22, 1801.

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# S E R M O N,

DELIVERED AT

PLIMOUTH,

DECEMBER 22, 1801,

COMMEMORATIVE

OF THE

PIOUS ANCESTRY,

WHO FIRST IMIGRATED TO THAT PLACE, 1620.

BY

JOHN ALLYN, S. H. M.

Pastor at DUXBORO'.

- “And the woman fled into the wilderneys where she had a  
“a place prepared of God.” *Rev. xii. 6.*
- “The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied  
“and grew.” *Ex. i. 12.*
- “Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is  
“there any divination against Israel.” *Num. xxiii. 23.*

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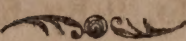


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HEBREWS xii. 2.

—BY IT THE ELDERS OBTAINED A GOOD  
REPORT.



**T**HE ELDERS alluded to in the text were the Fathers of the antediluvian age,—the progenitors and princes of the nation of Israel. Their names, with sketches of their history, are furnished in the chapter of the text.

It is the *point* of the sacred writer's discourse in this chapter, to shew the *foundation* of that celebrity which these *elders* gained in the world,—by *what means* “they obtained a good report.” *This was* FAITH. By the vigorous and ardent exercises of *faith* the *elders* “subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises,” and thus established an honourable discrimination of character with their cotemporaries, and with posterity.

THE context furnishes an historical illustration of religious *faith* which may be contemplated with pious effect by the christian, and if weighed with attention prove “profitable for instruction and correction” to those who are addicted to controversy about this *religious* exercise. By the example of  
Noah



Noah we are instructed that divine faith implies a most heedful attention to the warnings of God.—  
 “By faith he being warned of God of things not  
 “seen as yet, moved with fear prepared an ark to  
 “the saving of his house. The example of Abraham enforces the obligation of an *unhesitating* compliance with the commands of heaven. “By faith  
 “Abraham when he was called to go out into a  
 “place which he should after receive for an inheritance obeyed.” Also, “By faith Abraham when  
 “he was tried, offered up Isaac.” The history of Isaac and Jacob illustrates the duty of unshaken reliance on the divine promises. “By faith Isaac blessed  
 “Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. “By faith Jacob when he was dying, blessed both  
 “the sons of Joseph.” Another quality of faith appears in the character of Moses. “By faith Moses  
 “when he was come to years, refused to be called  
 “the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather  
 “to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to  
 “enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”——The other illustrations of faith contained in the chapter of the text are highly instructive, and merit the most serious regard of all who are solicitous to frame their principles, to order their conduct by the standard of divine revelation.

*Is it degrading to the elders of sacred history, or is it exalting too much the Fathers of New-England, to compare them together?* Whatever unlikeness there may be in circumstances of history, or minute features of character, connected with the age and state of society



ety in which they respectively lived, a resemblance in this point will be confessed by all—"Through faith they obtained a good report." Though living in ages remote, and countries distant, the fathers eulogized in the chapter of the text, and the worthies brought to our recollection by this day and occasion, attract consideration on the same account. The *former* did obtain, and the latter deserve a *good report* on account of the conquering influences of FAITH,—conquering the temptations of the world, and supporting them under every afflictive trial.

VARIOUS, and diverse are the sources of reputation. The page of history gives the knowledge of some who have fought and acquired the fame of military prowess ; who fearless of pain or danger have exposed their lives in the field of battle, and voluntarily met a glorious death in defence of country. Others have signalized themselves by literary acquisitions. With uncommon vigour and elasticity of mind they burst the bands of ignorance—revealed things hidden from the foundation of the world. Others again in ages past and present have distinguished themselves as Statesmen. With eyes of discernment peculiar to themselves they have pierced the mask of intrigue,----calculated the probable changes in the political world,—framed wise measures upon the foresight of national feelings and circumstances, and thus have gotten a name in the earth.—But the text and this anniversary lead to a different contemplation : They direct our thoughts to men who have "*shone as lights*" in the religious world, who  
have



have been distinguished by ardent piety ; the objects of whose supreme love were God, and his worship. Men illustrious by the purity of their morals, uncorrupted by the most delusive snares of vice, surmounting formidable dangers and difficulties, in the execution of duty “ not counting even their lives dear to them so that they might finish their christian course “ with joy” ; and who thus *obtained a good report*.

It is unnecessary, in a formal manner, to justify the attachment of the character now described to the *ancestry* of New-England. Their title to a *good report through faith* is as well established as that of the scripture patriarchs. It is our object in the sequel of the discourse, upon this interesting occasion, to give some sketches of their history ; some specimens of their religious principles ; to display the motives actuating them to conflict with so many dangers and labours ; and to distinguish with just encomia their renowned leaders.

In the prosecution of this object it is expected to *perpetuate* the knowledge of things already familiar to the minds of some rather than to gratify the antiquarian with new articles of instruction. Our discourse may teach the rising generation, but not those who have attended to the early history of their country.

THE commencement of that history to be sketched is subsequent to the *reformation*. This reformation which took place in several parts of Europe in the 15 century was only partial. Indeed to use the language of Mr. Robinson, the pastor of those who removed from Leyden to this place, “ It was not “ possible



“ possible that the christian world should come so  
 “ lately out of such antichristian darkness, and that  
 “ full perfection of knowledge should brake forth at  
 “ once.” This *partiality* in reforming is, particularly, manifest in the ecclesiastical history of England ; and indeed from the present state of discipline and worship in that country. The episcopal hierarchy under the first protestant princes differed little in its oppressions from the church of Rome. The *grand* corruptions of popery were purged away :—The doctrinal principles of the reformers were adopted : Yet still they retained many burdensome and offensive ceremonies, and particularly the ecclesiastic governors were “ guilty of being lords over God’s heritage, “ and not ensamples to the flock.” Assisted by the power of the civil magistrate, they required, under severe penalties more uniformity in principles of religious doctrine, and in habits of worship, than is possible to subsist among men of different talents and improvements. This requisition of uniformity gave rise to a dissent, and finally to a separation from the episcopal church, though it was in many important articles truly protestant and reformed.

THE first notices of this second reformation occur in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, at the conclusion of the 16th century. The ecclesiastical arrangements established by that Princess were displeasing to many of her subjects. It was by some thought the English church resembled in too many points the church of Rome, and they began zealously to advocate a more thorough reformation, particularly a *purser* style of worship.



From this circumstance they were stigmatized by their adversaries with the name of PURITANS. Those in authority were far from being disposed to second their views. Indeed they were severe in their measures to suppress the growing heresy. Had the friends of additional reform been united in sentiments, principles and manners, historians observe, "it is difficult to conjecture what would have been the issue of contest with the Government." But the fact was, that being composed of persons of different rank, character, opinion and intention, they were unanimous but in one thing, antipathy and opposition to the doctrine and discipline established by law. In other respects they were disunited, and hence became speedily subdivided into lesser *sects*, bearing different names. Of these, the most famous was formed by Robert Brown. He has been described as a man of insinuating manners, but unsteady in his views of men and things. He zealously advocated a total separation from the national establishment. But his followers not being able to endure the severities brought on them by their violent zeal, and being finally abandoned by their leader, they declined in number and zeal. At this crisis, the more wise and moderate among the dissenters, relaxing from the severity of the opinions and maxims supported by Brown, their apostate leader, and perceiving his and their own defects, they set themselves with zeal and diligence to correct his system, and to form one less odious to their adversaries, and less censurable in the view of sober christians. A worthy apostle of this new reformation was

John



John Robinson. The character of this man, especially in later life, appears highly apostolic. He has been denominated a semi-separatist on account of the reluctance he manifested in separating from the established church. "He studied peace and union so far as might agree with faith and a good conscience. He, and the church under him, made no schism or separation from the *reformed churches*, but as occasion offered held communion with them." "They professed and desired to practice a separation from the world, and the works of the world." It is particularly observed by Governor Winflow, "If any joining to us when we lived at Leyden, or since we came to New England have with the manifestation of their faith and profession of holiness held forth therewith separation from the Church of England; I have diverse times heard our pastor stop them forthwith, shewing them that we required no such things at their hands, but only to hold forth faith in Jesus Christ, holiness in the fear of God, and submission to every divine appointment; leaving the Church of England to themselves and to the Lord, to whom we ought to pray to reform what was amiss among them."\* This testimony merits the more attention as it leads us to distinguish our ancestors, with their pastor, from Brown and his particular adherents, and other sectarian, disorganizing reformers of the like cast, who, under pretence of restoring a purer faith and worship, have only with intemperate zeal "turned things upside down."

THE

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\* Prince's New-England Chron. page 88.



THE principles of Mr. Robinson, from whom we inherit many maxims of order observed in our churches, appear to be of a catholic complexion. He was zealous in promoting Reformation, but felt no disposition to pour forth bitter invectives upon churches governed by different rules, or pronounce them unworthy of the christian name. The mildness of these sentiments did not however secure their worthy advocate, and his followers, from persecution. The puritans of every class were confounded in one mass, and persecuted with unrelenting severity. King James declared, “ *I will have one doctrine and one discipline, one religion in substance and ceremony.*”\*

AT the close of the year 1607, “ Mr. Robinsons Church in the north of England, being extremely harassed, some cast into prison, some beset in their houses, some forced to leave their farms and families, they begin to fly over to Holland for purity of worship and liberty of conscience.”†

BEFORE we pursue this history any further, let us attend to a short account of those principles, in the suppression of which the most severe measures were used. The elementary principles of the puritan system were these, “ That the inspired scriptures only contain the true religion ;—that nothing is to be accounted the protestant religion respecting either faith or worship but what is taught in them :—that every man has a right of judging for himself, of trying doctrines by them, and of worshipping according to his apprehension of the meaning of them. “ As

\* Prince’s N. E. Chron. page 9th.

† Do. page 23.



“ As to faith and the holy sacraments, the doctrinal  
 “ articles of the church of England and of other  
 “ reformed churches in Europe were believed to be  
 “ agreeable to the Holy Oracles.” In matters purely  
 “ of an ecclesiastical nature, they held, “ That no par-  
 “ ticular church ought to consist of more members  
 “ than can conveniently watch over one another, and  
 “ usually meet and worship in one congregation :—  
 “ That every particular church of Christ is only to  
 “ consist of such as appear to believe in and obey  
 “ him :—That any competent number of such, when  
 “ their consciences oblige them, have a right to em-  
 “ body into a church for their mutual edification :—  
 “ That this embodying is by some certain contract,  
 “ expressed or implied :—That being embodied they  
 “ have a right to chuse their own officers :—That  
 “ these officers are Pastors, Ruling Elders and Dea-  
 “ cons :—And these being chosen have no lordly, ar-  
 “ bitrary or imposing power, but can only rule and  
 “ minister with the consent of the brethren :—That  
 “ all churches and church officers are equal in their  
 “ rights and priviledges :—That Baptism is to be ad-  
 “ ministrated only to visible believers and their unadult  
 “ children, (and this without the sign of the cross :)—  
 “ That excommunication should be wholly spiritual  
 “ and not accompanied with any penalties of a tem-  
 “ poral nature :—And finally, while they strictly ob-  
 “ served the Lords Day and days of Fasting and  
 “ Thanksgiving as the state of Providence required,  
 “ they held that all other *times* of worship were not to  
 “ be regarded, but utterly relinquished. These were  
 “ the



“ the main principles of that scriptural and religious  
 “ liberty, for which our ancestors suffered in England,  
 “ fled to Holland, traversed the ocean, and sought a  
 “ dangerous retreat in these remote and savage des-  
 “ erts of North America ; that here they might fully  
 “ enjoy them to their last posterity.”\*

It is obvious in this place to reflect on the nature and effects of persecution. How unpromising a method is this of making men good ? Acts of religion performed with reluctance are not the rational service of a man, nor can they possess any acceptability with God. Of what avail is “ bodily exercise,” if the mind and heart have no concurrence therewith ? Persecution may break,—it often has broke, the heart ; but did it ever open the heart to understand the scriptures and to adore the works of God ?—Persecution is indeed the most probable way of making men worse. Conviction antecedes conversion ; and till conviction be produced, it is even better for a man to act, without any molestation, conformably to a false opinion, than that he should pay an unwilling and insincere obedience even to the laws of God. Persecution is contrary to the spirit of Christianity. Our Saviour did not call fire from heaven, or assemble battalions of Angels to subdue the unbelief of corrupt hearts. But, to the obstinacy of scribes and pharisees, he opposed acts of kindness, miracles, arguments, exhortations and reproofs. And his Apostles !—they did not persecute, but were persecuted. They received no command to exercise cruelty in establishing the pure worship of God. If we once

\* Prince, 93.



admit the lawfulness of persecution, what is it but to admit in every sect throughout christendom, the mutual right to vex and destroy? And thus, to open wide the way of hatred and revenge?

THE reigning prince in the time of our fathers might say in defence of his measures, "That they will make men bethink themselves,—examine facts and arguments which would otherwise have been overlooked." But what are the instructions of experience in this case? They declare that temporal punishments inflicted by men create either hypocrites or martyrs.

THE advocate of persecution may further say, "That indulgence encourages heresy to the utter destruction of heretics, and it is an act of mercy to punish them *here*, so that they may *hereafter* be saved from everlasting misery." But what have been the fruits of this principle in the world? They have been inquisitions, assassinations, violations of faith, perjuries; and it may be added, that the persecuting zeal of religionists has furnished some nutriment to modern philosophy, which threatens to overturn every institution, civil and religious, that has been recommended by experience, handed down from our ancestors, and sanctioned by the most unquestionable marks of divine approbation.

FINALLY, (if more need be said in dispraise of that diabolical compassion dictating persecution as a mean of piety) it is hostile to free inquiry, and the reformation of errors and abuses, and if universally practised it must terminate in the utter subversion of Christianity.



tianity. Religious faith should not depend upon fashion or human authority, but upon the authority of God, in the exercise of our best reason and judgment.\*

BUT let us renew our attention to the persecuted *pilgrims*, and follow them in their trials and patience. Being treated with every mark of insult and cruelty in their native land,—being exposed to the severe penalties of the ecclesiastical law,—their perplexity and distress daily increasing,—emigration to some foreign country seemed the only means of peace and safety. “ Their first views were directed to Holland, where  
“ the spirit of commerce had dictated a free toleration  
“ of religious opinions ; a blessing, which neither the  
“ wisdom of politicians, nor the charity of clergymen,  
“ had admitted into any other of the European  
“ states.”† But the execution of this purpose was attended with difficulty. It was necessary to practise concealment,—to give extravagant rates for passages. They were treacherously betrayed by those whom they had engaged to favour their escape, robbed of their money, brought before the magistrates, and imprisoned.

“ IN the spring of 1608, they made another attempt to escape, but with partial success. A part of the company who agreed to embark together had arrived on board ship, when the remainder were suddenly attached, apprehended and carried before the Justices of the Peace ; but they, not knowing what to do  
with

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\* See this subject treated more diffusely by Doctor Jortin, vol. IV. Sermon. 9th.

† Dr. Belknap.



with so many helpless and distressed persons, dismissed them. This remainder having sold their houses and effects were dependant on the charity of their friends. Those who put to sea were overtaken by a severe storm, narrowly escaped destruction from its fury, and were fourteen days in their passage to Amsterdam. Here in the course of the summer the scattered flock with their pastor were happily united.

CONTINUING in this place about a year, they then removed to Leyden to avoid the infection of a controversy which broke out in a congregation of dissenters who had emigrated before them. In this latter city they continued for eleven years "in great love and harmony both among themselves and their neighbour citizens." They were much respected for their diligence, fidelity and honesty. Even the magistrates of the city in reproof of some French Protestants testified, "These English have lived among us ten years, and yet we never had any suit or accusation against them; but your quarrels are continual."

BUT our ancestors were here pressed with urgent considerations to make another removal. "In the year 1617, Mr. Robinson and his Church began to think of a removal to America." The reasons of this purpose deserve to be particularly related. 1. "The difficulties in Holland discouraged many from coming over to them out of England, and obliged many to return." Governor Bradford says on this head, that, "Many who came to them and desired to be with them, could not endure the great labour  
c "and



“ and hard fare with other inconveniences which they  
 “ endured : But though they loved their persons,  
 “ approved their cause, and honoured their suffer-  
 “ ings ; yet they left them as it were weeping, as  
 “ Orpah did her mother-in-law Naomi ; or as those  
 “ Romans did Cato in Utica, who desired to be ex-  
 “ cused and born with, though they could not all be  
 “ Cato’s : For many, though they desired to enjoy  
 “ the ordinances of God in their purity, and the lib-  
 “ erty of the Gospel with them ; yet, alas, they ad-  
 “ mitted of bondage with danger of conscience, rather  
 “ than to endure these hardships ; yea some preferred  
 “ the prisons in England, rather than this liberty in  
 “ Holland with these afflictions.” (2.) “ By reason  
 “ of these difficulties, with the licentiousness of the  
 “ youth, and temptations of the place, many of their  
 “ children left their parents, some becoming soldiers,  
 “ others taking to foreign voyages, and some to  
 “ courses tending to dissoluteness, and the danger of  
 “ their souls ; to the great grief of their parents,  
 “ and fear left their posterity through these tempta-  
 “ tions and examples should degenerate and religion  
 “ die among them. (3.) From an inward zeal and  
 “ great hope of laying some foundation, or making  
 “ way for propagating the kingdom of Christ to the  
 “ remote ends of the earth ; though they should be  
 “ but as stepping stones to others.”\* This relation,  
 bearing the marks of truth,—this relation, simple and  
 unaffected, combines in a pathetic manner the differ-  
 ent motives of self-preservation, religion, and phi-  
 lanthropy. What reproach does it cast upon the  
 principles and manners of our own times !

\* Prince, 49.



THIS relation further dictates a reflection on the mixture of good and evil in every situation. In the most agreeable settlements here below there are some inconveniences, some unpleasant circumstances—something wanting to complete our happiness. This completion is in reserve for the righteous in the future kingdom of heaven. Our ancestors, though they enjoyed much comfort in the ways of God,—though they were courteously entertained, and much respected by the Dutch,—though blessed with a pious, learned and of obliging manners, were pressed with many *reasons* to seek a more agreeable residence. It is visible from the above relation that these reasons were *not of a worldly nature*. And a suspicion of this sort is removed by this circumstance, that their views were directed to a newly discovered and uncultivated country. A determination however was not formed without much deliberation and fervent prayer. The first step in the execution of their purpose was to send a deputation to the Virginia Company in London, who were also directed to inquire if the King would give them liberty of conscience in his American dominions. The letters written by Mr. Robinson and Brewster in behalf of the congregation, and presented by their agents, Carver and Cushman, are sufficiently interesting to justify a recital. To recommend themselves as proper persons for emigration, they say, (1.) “ We verily believe and trust the Lord “ is with us ; to whom and whose service we have “ given ourselves in many trials, and that he will “ graciously prosper our endeavours. (2.) We are “ well



“ well weaned from the delicate milk of our mother-  
 “ country, and inured to the difficulties of a strange  
 “ land. (3.) The people are, for the body of them,  
 “ industrious and frugal, we think we may safely say,  
 “ as any company of people in the world. (4.) We  
 “ are knit together as a body in a most strict and  
 “ sacred bond and covenant of the Lord ; of the  
 “ violation whereof we make great conscience, and  
 “ by virtue whereof we hold ourselves straitly tied to  
 “ all care of each others good, and of the whole. (5.)  
 “ It is not with us, as with other men ; whom small  
 “ things can discourage, or small discontentments  
 “ cause to wish ourselves at home again.”\* This let-  
 ter, together with the good carriage of them who  
 presented it, produced a resolution in the Virginia  
 Company to favour their designs. “ As to the King,  
 he promised to connive at their religious practices,  
 but he denied them toleration under the great seal.”

PASSING over other incidents relating to the ven-  
 erable pilgrims during the two following years, our  
 attention is forcibly arrested by the circumstances of  
 their embarkation, and voyage to America. In the  
 spring of 1620, it was determined that a part of the  
 society should embark for America, and make prepa-  
 ration for the remainder, which it was agreed should  
 follow them. To fix the doubting, to confirm the  
 strong, and to give animation to all, Mr. Robinson  
 delivered a discourse from those words in the 1st  
 book of Samuel, xxiii. 3, 4. “ And David’s men  
 “ said unto him, *Behold we be afraid here in Judah ;*  
 “ *how much more then if we come to Keilah against the*

\* Prince, 52.

“ *Philistines ?*



“ *Philistines ? Then David enquired of the Lord yet again. And the Lord answered him and said, Arise and go down to Keilah, for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand.*” We can find no extracts from this sermon : It is not difficult however to imagine, what the occasion, and the preacher’s piety dictated. The events propitious to their undertaking were probably brought into view as tokens of divine approbation, and as an earnest in future of the divine blessing. “ The greater number being to stay, require their pastor to stay with them : Their elder, Mr. Brewster, to go with the other : Those who go first to be an absolute church of themselves, as well as those that stay ; with this proviso, that as any go over or return, they shall be reputed as members, without further dismissal or testimonial : And those who tarry to follow the rest as soon as they can.”\*

ON July 20, they were prepared for the moving separation of the next day by another discourse from Ezra viii. 21, “ *Then I proclaimed a fast, at the river Abava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, TO SEEK OF HIM A RIGHT WAY FOR US, AND FOR OUR LITTLE ONES, AND FOR ALL OUR SUBSTANCE.*”

OF this discourse we are furnished with a specimen by Governor Winflow, the liberality of which will excite admiration, when we consider the bigotry of the age in which it was delivered ; and even at this day, which claims the honour of high improvement, may not be unprofitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. The Governor

\* Prince, 66.

informs



informs us, that when the Plymouth people parted  
 from their renowned Pastor, with whom they had  
 always lived in the most intire affection, “ He charged  
 “ us before God and his blessed angels to follow  
 “ him no farther than he followed Christ : And  
 “ if God should reveal any thing to us by any  
 “ other instrument of his, to be as ready to re-  
 “ ceive it as ever we were to receive any truth by  
 “ his ministry : For he was very confident that the  
 “ Lord had more light and truth yet to break forth  
 “ out of his holy word. He took occasion also to  
 “ bewail the state of the reformed churches who were  
 “ come to a period in religion, and would go no fur-  
 “ ther than the instruments of their reformation. As  
 “ for example, the Lutherans could not be drawn to  
 “ go beyond what Luther said ; for whatever part of  
 “ Gods word he had further revealed to Calvin, they  
 “ had rather die than embrace it ; and so, said he,  
 “ you see the Calvinists, they stick where He left  
 “ them—a misery much to be lamented : For though  
 “ they were precious, shining lights in their times ;  
 “ yet God had not revealed his whole will to them :  
 “ And were they alive now, they would be as ready  
 “ to embrace further light as that they had received.  
 “ Here also he put us in mind of our church cov-  
 “ enant ; whereby we engaged with God and one  
 “ another to receive whatever light or truth should  
 “ be made known to us from His *written word*. But  
 “ withal exhorted us to take heed what we receive for  
 “ truth ; and well to examine, compare and weigh it  
 “ with other scriptures before we receive it. For,  
 “ said he, *it is not possible the christian world should*  
 “ *come*



“*come so lately out of such antichristian darknes, and  
 “that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at  
 “once.”*\* Mr. Robinson, knowing the affection of  
 his people, and aware that this affection might lead  
 them to entertain too much respect for his opinions,  
 was led to suggest the cautions above related. They  
 give us an exalted opinion of their author : They  
 breathe a noble spirit of liberty, and are deserving of  
 the attention of reformed churches and ministers,  
 even in this age.

BUT suppressing *reflections*, let us proceed in the  
 relation of *events*. “Having spent the evening pre-  
 vious to their embarkation in friendly, entertaining  
 and christian converse, on July 22, the wind being  
 fair, our voyagers leave the city of Leyden, being ac-  
 companied by most of their brethren, and go on  
 board the vessel prepared for their reception : But  
 not till they had fallen on their knees, and, by the  
 mouth of their affectionate pastor, with watery cheeks  
 commended themselves to the protection of Almighty  
 God. Then they took leave with mutual embraces  
 and many tears.”

BEFORE we follow our Fathers over the ocean, you  
 will indulge me in a tribute of respect to their  
 worthy pastor. This digression will be the more  
 readily pardoned, as his character is peculiarly inter-  
 esting to ministers of the Gospel. After the Apostles,  
 he is as good a copy for their imitation as is furnish-  
 ed by the history of the church. “He has been de-  
 scribed as being a man of an excellent understanding,  
 great modesty, candour and integrity ; courteous

\* Prince, 90.

and



and obliging manners ; ready on conviction to acknowledge his errors ; fond of conversing with good men ; moderate and charitable, yet zealous and strict in his religion : As he advanced in years, he grew mild and benevolent : He was dextrous at peace-making ; able to give good advice. Loved most affectionately by his flock, respected by the magistrates of Leyden, he died the 1st of March, 1625, in the 50th year, in the height of his reputation and usefulness ; and, 90 years after his death, was still remembered and lamented as a great and good man." Surely, *He was a Pastor after God's own heart.*

WITHOUT noticing the troubles which beset our Fathers on the coast of England, the perils which attended them on their voyage to this continent, we shall land them upon this shore, and briefly view the hardships, dangers and sorrows which *here* awaited them. We land them on this shore ! But to what do we introduce them ? Do we bring them to warm fires, convenient houses, plentiful tables, friendly neighbours ? Nay. A sweeping sickness some years before had not spared even the *barbarian* to *show them some little kindness*. It was indeed to them a matter of devout rejoicing that they had safely passed the vast ocean ; but they entered upon a new sea of troubles. The winter was sharp : The storms fierce : It was dangerous to travel far by land : The coast was unknown. It was vain to look back the way they had come, and the forward prospect was woods and thickets,—a discouraging contrast to the cultivated fields of Europe they had lately left. And, to fill up the



the measure of discouragements, to add horror to the dismal scene, a general sickness, attended with great mortality, reduced them to half their number on landing. Worn out with fatigue, debilitated by disease, sorrowful by the loss of near connexions and intimate friends, they had to unlade and secure their goods, to build cottages for habitation, to consult about laws, civil and military, and almost *daily*, at the close of the winter, to follow one and another of their company to the grave.

BUT their patience and fortitude were as extraordinary as their trials. By the powerful energies of religious principle they *were not wearied nor faint in their minds*. By the armour of righteousness they stood approved in all their afflictions, necessities, and distresses. Notwithstanding the diminution of bodily strength, the *inward man was daily renewed*; and through him who loved them, and whom they also loved, they were *in all these things more than conquerors*.

THE piety of our Fathers, in *doing and suffering* the will of God, merits attentive notice and high praise. Particularly, with what religious gratitude did they record every smile of divine Providence! Though poor in the extreme, yet how much more thankful were they than we are, who have entered upon their labours with multiplied advantages! The springing spire of grass,—a favourable gale to their weather-beaten shallop,—a pittance of corn, invited them to make the most liberal expressions of gratitude to heaven. In the present day, the world is so convulsed in opinion by the vices of men, that many are disposed to doubt of the agency of God in human affairs,



fairs, and few are found to adore Him, the giver of every good and perfect gift. That punishment of this ingratitude and impiety may not be far off, which shall bring men to the full acknowledgment of a divine providence, the belief of which was the comfort and support of our ancestors ; and its effects, both in circumstances of prosperity and adversity, alternately begat exalted praise and profound submission. We have in this and many other instances degenerated from the pious sentiments and practices of our fathers. *The harp, the viol, the tabret, the pipe, and wine are in our feasts ; but we regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hand.\**

BUT the *manners* as well as the *piety* of our Fathers deserve commendation. *They were fruitful in good works.* Their faith worked by love, purified their hearts, and made them holy in all manner of conversation. We have need to be stirred up by their example to a stricter observance of the Lord's-day,—to a greater diligence in training up the young in the ways of the Lord. Their impartial regard to justice is an exemplary reproof of modern fraud and oppression. We may learn from them the exercise of compassion to the distressed, and the genuine motions of disinterested benevolence. In one word, the details of history in our possession will justify the belief, that the first planters of Plymouth approached near to the pattern of the primitive churches in doctrine, discipline, faith and manners.

To these general encomia bestowed on the Fathers indiscriminately, this occasion requires a respectful  
 \* Isaiah v. 12. mention



mention of some particular characters, who were the leaders of the people in their hazardous enterprize, and their most active supporters in seasons of afflictive trial.

THE names of Carver, Bradford, Brewster, Standish, Winslow, Cushman, will ever be mentioned with veneration by all who justly appreciate patience, courage, integrity, public spirit, practical wisdom and piety. These men, in their principles, feelings and conduct resembled the ELDERS referred to in the text, of *whom the world was not worthy*, and who have all left a *good report through faith*.

IN CARVER we behold the meekness of Moses, and his piety too, *choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God*.

THERE was none like BRADFORD among all the people : Like Joshua he *was full of the spirit of wisdom*. *The Lord magnified him in the sight of the people*.

BREWSTER, though not a priest was nevertheless like Noah *a preacher of righteousness—a just man, and one who found grace in the sight of God*.

STANDISH wielded *the sword of the Lord and of Gideon*. And the people might say of him as the Israelites did of David, *Thou art worth ten thousand of us*. He is ranked among the heroes of antiquity, *who waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens*.

WINSLOW was a *faithful messenger* ; he gave himself as an *hostage* for his people. He was possessed of the *good understanding which giveth favour*.

CUSHMAN *preached peace to the brethren* : And  
though



*though not called of God as was Aaron to the office of a priest, yet his prophesyings are not to be despised.\**

*“THEY all have obtained with posterity a good report through faith : They died in faith : They were persuaded of the fulfilment of the divine promises : They embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. By their spirit and conduct it is plainly declared that they sought a better country. If they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned : But they desired a better country that is an heavenly.”*

WHILE we thus do the merited honour to the memory of our departed Ancestors, let us claim nothing to ourselves but from an imitation of their virtues. Let us remember those words of John the Baptist to the Jews, “Bring forth fruits meet for repentance. And think not to say within yourselves, “We have Abraham to our father.” And again, when the Jews said unto our Saviour, Abraham is our father : he said unto them, “If ye were Abraham’s children ye would do the works of Abraham.”

THE history we contemplate not only furnishes exemplary *characters*, but instructive and interesting *events*. We shall mention a few of them, and recommend them to the rising generation as containing lessons to the heart and head, calculated not only to amuse innocently, but to make them wiser and better.

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\* See his excellent Sermon on Self-Love, delivered 1621.



THE first interview with the native Indians has many engaging particulars, the detail of which must excite in every reader of sensibility twice the interest of the most enchanting romance.

THE ill success of their first plan of labouring in common is instructive, and if evidence were wanting, it proves that plenty is best secured when every man plants and waters his own ground, for his own private benefit, and trusts to personal exertions for a support. After our fathers had made a division of land (not for an inheritance, but only to till) “it  
“made all industrious,—gave content. Even the  
“women went into the field to work, and more  
“corn was planted than ever.”

THE treaty made with Massasoit is a valuable document relating to ancient times. It stipulates reciprocal benefits; it is well worded, and what is more, it shews that the parties meant *to do justly*.\*

IN the progress of the history before us, it is highly interesting to read the account of the friendly visit to Massasoit, when he was sick. Mr. Winslow

was

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\* League of Friendship between Governor Carver and Massasoit.

- “Art. 1st. That neither he nor his should injure any of ours.  
2. That if they did, he should send the offender that we might punish him.  
3. That if our tools were taken away, he should restore them: And if any of ours did any harm to any of his, we would do the like to them.  
4. If any unjustly warred against him, we would aid him; and if any warred against us, he should aid us.  
5. He should certify his neighbour confederates of this, that they might not wrong us, but be comprised in the conditions of peace.  
6. That when their men come to us, they should leave their bows and arrows behind them, as we should leave our pieces when we come to them.—And thus doing, King James would esteem him as his friend and ally.”

This league lasted above fifty years. *Prince, 102.*



was appointed to this service, having Hobamock for a guide and interpreter. It was rumoured by some Indians, as they pursued their journey, that Massasoit was dead. The eulogy of Hobamock is irresistibly eloquent. "My loving sachem! many have I known, but never any like thee"! Then turning to me (i. e. Winflow) he said, whilst I lived I should never see his like among the Indians. He was no liar, he was not bloody and cruel like other Indians; in anger and passion he was soon reclaimed; easy to be reconciled toward such as had offended him; ruled by reason in such measure as he would not scorn the advice of mean men; and that he governed his men better with few strokes than others did with many; truly loving where he loved; yea, he feared we had not a faithful friend left among the Indians, shewing how often he restrained their malice. He continued a long speech, with such signs of lamentation and unfeigned sorrow as would have made the hardest heart relent."

HAVE we not here a *greater* than Alexander the Great? Might not the old and new tyrants in Europe profit by meditation on this character of Massasoit? To what *christian* prince can we justly attribute a character of more amiableness and worth?—The visit of Winflow to this excellent Sachem was a practical comment on that apostolic precept, "*Is any sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.*"

CLOSING



CLOSING our relation of the things which happened in old time, let us look for one moment to the present state of our country. From small and weak beginnings how extensive the population, how numerous the improvements of English America! When we contemplate the present importance of the United States in connexion with a period short of 200 years, we have a comment on the prophetic expression, "A nation born at once." In the course of two centuries and our sons will be planted on the banks of the Mississippi, and the wilderness beyond "shall blossom as a rose." But, alas, a retrospect of past events begets the unpleasant anticipation of wars and fightings. We see in future prospect the Kings of the *South*, begotten of luxury, pride, licentiousness and impiety, invading the hardy inhabitants of the North. We see the armies of the East and West encountering each other at some narrow pass in the mountains, like the armies of Europe and Asia at the freights of Thermopylæ. We see thrones and sceptres, bastiles and fetters, the punishment of heaven on guilty men, who no longer deserve liberty, or are capable of enjoying her. Should all this be prevented,—it must happen through the kind interposition of that Being who "rules the raging of the sea, and stilleth the tumult of the people."

"The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice" in hope.—

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## A Prayer.

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ALMIGHTY GOD! who hast made of one blood all nations of men inhabiting the face of the earth; who hast determined their times, and the bounds of their habitation! We prostrate ourselves before Thee in humble acknowledgment of all the mercies shewn to our Fathers. Thou didst deliver them in six troubles, yea in seven, and nothing *fatal* overtook them. In famine thou didst redeem them from death, and in war from the power of the sword. Thou didst deliver them from the hands of the oppressors; and when they wandered in the wilderness, and found no city to dwell in, then they cried unto Thee and thou didst hear their voice and look on their afflictions.

WE have heard with our ears, our Fathers have told us what work thou didst in their day, in the times of old, How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and didst plant *them*, and cause the light of thy countenance to shine upon them. The things which we have heard we will not hide from our children, but shew to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, so that they may know them, and arise and declare them to *their* children.

WE earnestly desire in ourselves a greater resemblance of our Fathers in their concernment for the  
soul



foul and things of another world ; in their faithfulness and constancy in the profession of religion ; in their zeal and activity in the discharge of duty. As thou didst call them from the evil of this present world, a chosen generation, to know thy will, to seek thy face, to know thy ways ; wilt thou also call us effectually to virtue, and may our light, as theirs did, shine before men and lead them to glorify Thee.

WE pray for all *reformed* churches ; may they be more reformed, and every plant not of thy planting be plucked up. May an end be put to all usurpation and tyranny, to all infringement on the rights of conscience and christian liberty. And may no weapon formed against the disciples of Christ be permitted to prosper. Hasten the deliverance of those who suffer for bearing testimony to the truth and are persecuted for righteousness sake.

BLESS the churches in our country. May not the fruits of christian professors be briars and thorns, but righteousness, peace and joy in the exercise of a holy spirit. May every thing be gathered from among thy people which worketh abomination, and may they be *wholly* sanctified through thy word and spirit.

BLESS the preachers of the Gospel. May they be faithful as pastors of the flock, and exemplary in all their conversation. Wilt thou furnish them for the good work of opening the eyes of men, and turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of sin unto holiness. While they stop the mouths of false prophets by soundness of doctrine and purity of  
 E character,



character, may their labours in edifying the body of *Christ* be crowned with full success. May they behave themselves not as having dominion over the faith of christians, but as helpers of their joy. As messengers of thy heavenly will, may they make full and clear manifestations of the truth, and commend themselves to every man's conscience in thy sight. May they *feel* the joy of that Salvation which they preach, the force of every motive they urge, and by their conduct as well as by their stated ministrations be preachers of righteousness.

BLESS the worshipping society in this place. May the rock of the pilgrims, and every vestige of antient times which they have among them, be associated with the recollection of those christian virtues by which their fathers were discriminated from the profane world. We pray for the unity and peace of the church in this place. May all unreasonable aversions be subdued. And by reflecting on the many important truths in which they agree, may they be led *with more candor* to discuss those points about which they differ.

BLESS to our perfect establishment in piety and virtue the recollection of this day. While we call up to view the history of our ancestors, and praise Thee for all the provisions of thy goodness, supporting and comforting them in seasons of sorrow and danger :— While we have a clear and grateful perception of *our* advantages, in many respects the fruit of *their* labours, may we with faithfulness hold up to view their principles



ciples to posterity, and urge upon our children the imitation of their christian virtues.

MAY we individually be gathered to our fathers in peace, having in the likeness of their zeal and fidelity served Thee in our day and generation. Unto the only wise God our Saviour be ascriptions of praise forever. AMEN.





















